

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L BANGKOK 21704

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TAGS: PGOV EIND TH
SUBJ: US - THAI TREATY OF AMITY AND COMMERCE

1.ON JULY 27, NATION CARRIED SPECULATIVE ARTICLE INDICATING THAT MFA AND OTHER GOVERNMENT OFFICES WERE CONSIDERING REVISION OF THE US-THAI AMITY AND COMMERCE TREATY. ARTICLE ALSO INDICATED SUBJECT MIGHT BE BROUGHT UP BY THAI ASEAN DELEGATION WHILE IN WASHINGTON.

2. ARTICLE CAUSED SOME STIR AMONG AMERICAN BUSINESS COMMUNITY AND CHARGE DISCUSSED IT ON JULY 28 WITH MFA UNDER SECRETARY ARUN. ARUN STATED THAT HE HAD READ THE ARTICLE WHICH HE CHARACTERIZED AS ESSENTIALLY SPECULATIVE AND PROBABLY BASED ON CONTACTS WITH WORKING LEVEL OFFICERS IN SOME OF THE MINISTRIES. ARUN INDICATED THAT SOME WEEKS AGO A MINISTERIAL WORKING COMMITTEE CHARGED WITH COORDINATION AND REVIEW OF TREATIES HAD RECOMMENDED THAT THE AMITY AND COMMERCE TREATY BE REVISED TO BRING IT IN CLOSER CONFORMANCE WITH SIMILAR TREATIES ENTERED INTO WITH OTHER COUNTRIES. ARUN SAID THAT WHEN THE RECOMMENDATION CROSSED HIS DESK, HE SENT IT TO THE FOREIGN MINISTER WITH A NOTE POINTING OUT THAT IN DEALING WITH BASIC RELATIONSHIPS WITH A MAJOR ALLY THE RTG HAD TO BRING TO BEAR MANY OTHER CONSIDERATIONS OTHER THAN UNIFORMITY. ARUN SAID HE EXPRESSED VIEW THAT A CONSIDERATION OF REVISION WAS QUITE PREMATURE.
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CONSEQUENTLY, ARUN SAID THAT THE FOREIGN MINISTER HAS NOT TAKEN ANY ACTION TO FORWARD THE RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE CABINET WHICH WOULD HAVE TO APPROVE ANY INITIATIVE TO REVISE THE TREATY. HE SAID THAT THAI DELEGATION HAD NO INTENTION TO BRING THIS MATTER UP IN WASHINGTON.

3. CHARGE POINTED OUT TO ARUM THAT GIVEN OUR MUTUAL OB-

JECTIVE TO IMPROVE INVESTMENT ATMOSPHERE, EVEN SPECULATION

ON TREATY REVISION COULD ONLY BE UNSETTLING, AS EVIDENCED
ALREADY BY THE REACTION OF THE US BUSINESS COMMUNITY TO THE
NATION ARTICLE. ARUN SAID THAT HE AND OTHER SENIOR
OFFICIALS WERE COMPLETELY AWARE OF THAT POINT AND ARTICLE
WAS CERTAINLY NOT DELIBERATELY PLANTED. ARUN SAID THAT HE
COULD ASSURE US THAT NO GOVERNMENT DECISION HAS BEEN MADE
TO REVISE THE TREATY AND IF ANY FURTHER ACTION IS TAKEN
WITH REGARD TO CONSIDERING THE WORKING COMMITTEE'S
RECOMMENDATION, HE WOULD INFORM US IMMEDIATELY.

4. COMMENT: GIVEN THE OVERALL DISPOSITION OF THE KRIANGSAK
GOVERNMENT, WE DO NOT BELIEVE THAT IT WOULD WISH TO FOUL
THE IMPROVING INVESTMENT ATMOSPHERE BY PRESSING FOR
REVISION OF THE AMITY AND COMMERCE TREATY. ARUN WAS
COMPLETELY AWARE OF THE NEGATIVE IMPRESSION ANY SUCH ACTION
WOULD GIVE AND EXPRESSED FULL UNDERSTANDING OF THE VARIOUS
CONSIDERATIONS RAISED BY CHARGE. AT THE SAME TIME, THE
TREATY'S BENEFICIAL PROVISIONS OBVIOUSLY DO BOTHER SOME
BUREAUCRATIC LEVELS AND THIS ISSUE MAY ARISE AGAIN.

5. WOULD SUGGEST THAT A SENIOR EA OFFICER MIGHT TAKE
OCCASION OF ARUN'S PRESENCE IN WASHINGTON TO INFORMALLY
NOTE ABOVE CONVERSATION, INDICATING OUR CONCERNS AND
APPRECIATION FOR HIS ASSURANCES. THIS WOULD EFFECTIVELY
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REINFORCE OUR APPROACH HERE. O'DONOHUE

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